



4

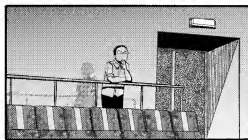
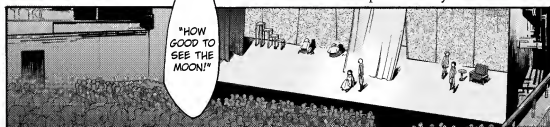
KASANE


d a r u m a
m a t s u u r a



4

Chapter Twenty-Seven: Salomé	3
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THE
FIRST TIME
I SAW HER
WAS IN THE
FINAL PER-
FORMANCE OF
THE SEAGULL,
DIRECTED BY
REITA UGOU.

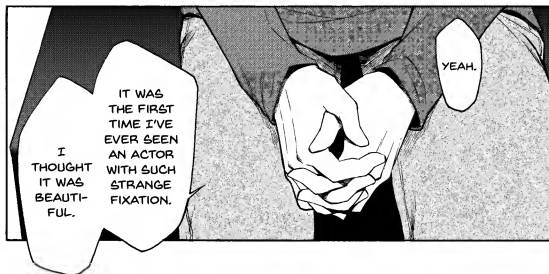
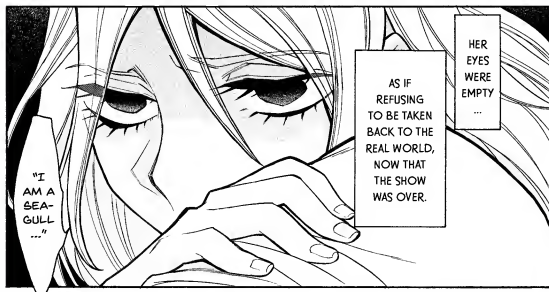


BUT
IT WAS
WHEN I
WAS
VISITING
AN ACTOR
FRIEND
IN THE
GREEN-
ROOM
THAT I
SAW...

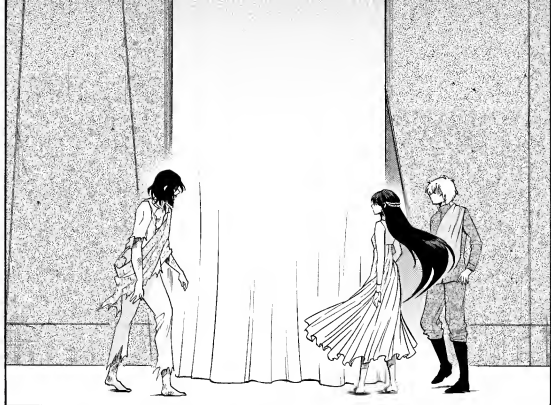
ON
STAGE,
SHE WAS
IMPRES-
SIVE...



"SO YOU ARE
AN AUTHOR
NOW, AND I AM
AN ACTRESS.
YOU ARE AN
AUTHOR, AND
I AM AN
ACTRESS..."













"I
WILL
KISS
THY
MOUTH,

"PROFANE
NOT THE
TEMPLE OF
THE LORD
GOD!"

JERK

"PRIN-
CESS,
DO NOT
SPEAK
OF
THESE
THINGS!"

JOKA-
NAAN!"



"I WILL
NOT LOOK
AT THEE
..."

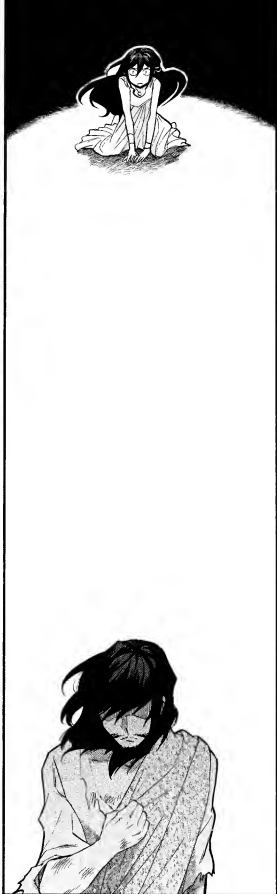
JOKANAAN
WOULD
NEVER
ACCEDE.

NO MATTER
HOW MUCH
SALOMÉ
DEMANDS
THAT KISS...



"THOU
ART
ACCURSED,
SALOMÉ,

THOU ART
ACCURSED."





SHE
CLOTHES
HERSELF
IN VEILS
AND
DANCES
FOR
THE
MAN
WHO
DESIRES
HER.

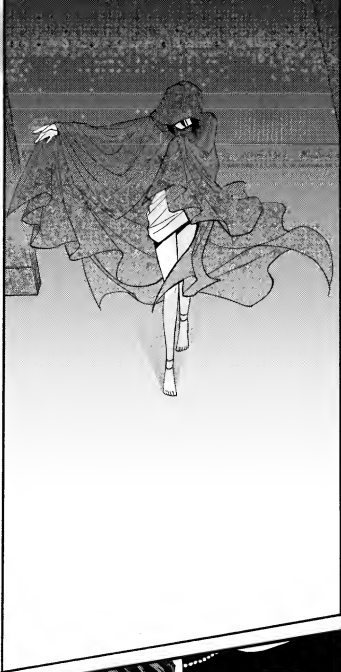
"I WILL
DANCE
FOR YOU,
TETRARCH."

THOUGH
SALOME
KNOWS
HER
STEP-
FATHER
VIEWS
HER
AS AN
OBJECT
OF
LUST..

GIVE ME
WHATSO-
EVER I
SHALL ASK
OF THEE,
TETRARCH?"

"WILL
YOU
IN-
DEED
..."





"AH!
WONDER-
FUL!
WONDER-
FUL!"





"..."

SALOMÉ'S
LOVE BOTH
PURELY CHASTE
AS A YOUNG
GIRL'S LOVE, AND
TAINTED AS WITH
THE BLOOD
OF A FILTHY
WHORE.

AND SO
IT RACES
TO A
BLOODY
END.



"THE
..."

THOU
ART
FAIRER
THAN
ALL THE
DAUGHT-
ERS OF
JUDAEA!

WHAT
IS IT
THAT
THOU
WOULDEST
HAVE?"

"O
SWEET
AND FAIR
SALOMÉ,

"THE
HEAD
OF
JOKA-
NAAN!"

**JOKA-
NAAN!**

JOKA-
NAAN,
THOU
WERT
THE MAN
THAT I
LOVED
ALONE
AMONG
MEN."



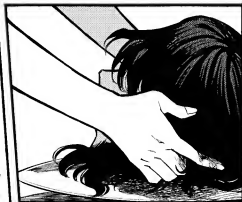
HAVE
NONE
OF ME,
JOKA-
NAAN."

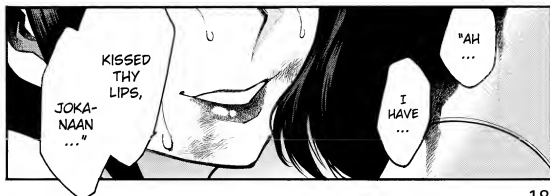
*THOU
WOULDST



PRINCESS
OF
JUDAEA!¹⁹

"ME,
SA-
LOMÉ,
DAUGH-
TER OF
HERODI-
AS.







SA-
LOMÉ
...

SALOMÉ,
HUH...



IT'S
LIKE
YOU'RE
SA-
LOMÉ.



DO YOU
WANT
ME TO
KISS YOU,
KINGO?



YOU'RE
ALWAYS
SO
CHILD-
ISH...
AND
SUCH A
FOOL.



I WILL
NOT
HEAD TO
DESTRUC-
TION, AS
SHE DID.

I WILL
HAVE
IT ALL:



I
WANTED
TO BE
YOUR
JOKA-
NAAN,

EVEN IF
IT MEANT
I'D END
UP BE-
HEADED.



I...



I...

WILL
NOT
BE LIKE
SALOMÉ.

LOVE,

FAME,

BEAUTY,

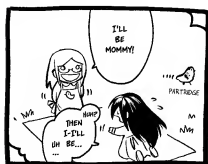
AND...WHAT I
COULD NEVER
HAVE, AS MY
UGLY SELF..

THIS
PLACE
FILLED
WITH
LIGHTS
...
WHERE
I BE-
LONG.

Chapter Twenty-Seven: the end

KASANE

GIRLS 8



WHEN
THE SKY
DARKENS
AND
ISOLA-
TION
CREEPS
IN...

WILL
NO ONE
LOOK
AT MY
FACE...

OR
CALL MY
NAME?

NOT
ANYONE
ELSE'S...

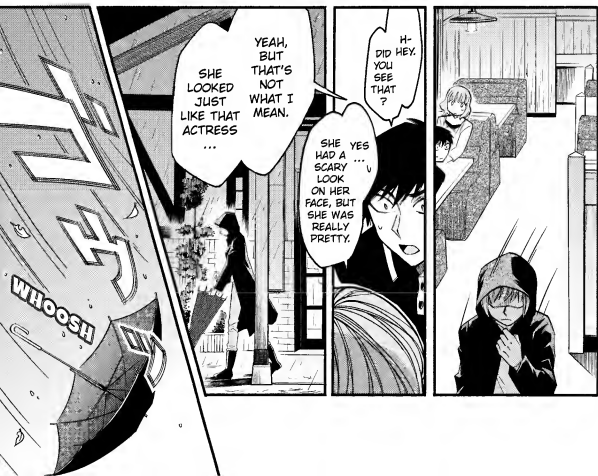
BUT
MY
NAME
...

Chapter Twenty-Eight: Flash











SHE
WAS THE
SPITTING
IMAGE OF
SUKEYO
FUCHI.

FLASH

BOOM

NOGIKU...

NOGIKU...

AREN'T
YOU
SCARED
OF MY
FACE?

MOTHER
...

I REMEMBER
YOU AS A
WOMAN WHO
GREW THINNER
AND WEAKER
BY THE DAY,
YOUR FACE
LOOKING
NOTHING LIKE
MY OWN.

HEY,
NOGIKU
...

YES,
WHEN
I'M
ALONE.
BUT
YOU'RE
HERE,
NOGIKU,
SO I'M
ALL
RIGHT.

ARE
YOU
SCARED
OF
THUN-
DER?

FOR THE THREE
YEARS WE LIVED
TOGETHER, SHE
REPEATED THAT
FEVERISHLY.

A WOMAN
NAMED
IZANA
STOLE MY
FACE.

THIS
ISN'T
MY
FACE.



HE LOVED
IZANA, WITH
MY FACE.

THAT'S WHY...
YOUR FATHER
DIDN'T LOVE
ME...

LOOKS
JUST LIKE
MY REAL
FACE.

YOUR
FACE
...

YOU'LL
BE
OKAY. BUT
NOGIKU,

IF ANYONE
ELSE WERE TO
HEAR ALL OF
THAT, I'M SURE
IT WOULDN'T
HAVE MADE
SENSE TO THEM.

BUT I
UNDER-
STOOD.

I'M
SURE YOUR
FATHER
WILL LOVE
YOU.





THAT
MEMORY
IS BURNED
INTO MY
RETINAS.
IT'LL
NEVER
LEAVE
ME.



THOUGH
I DON'T
KNOW
WHERE
I SAW
THAT
SCENE.



I HAVE
A VAGUE
MEMORY,
ONE OF
MY
EARLIEST
...



WITH
HER
FACE.



SOME-
ONE
WHO
WAS
NOT
MY
MOTHER
...

IF WHAT
MY MOTHER
SAID WAS
TRUE...

AND...

IF WHAT
I SAW WAS
REAL...



THEN MOTHER...

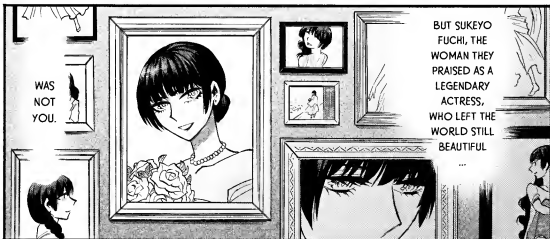


YOU WERE
BEAUTIFUL.



WAS
NOT
YOU.

BUT SUKEYO
FUCHI, THE
WOMAN THEY
PRAISED AS A
LEGENDARY
ACTRESS,
WHO LEFT THE
WORLD STILL
BEAUTIFUL





STRIPPED
OF EVERY-
THING,
YOUR BODY
AND SOUL
BECAME A
HUSK, AND
YOU DIED.



AND
THEN
...

WHAT
WAS LEFT
TO ME
WAS...



THAT
WOMAN
STOLE
FROM
YOU
...

YOUR
FACE,
STATUS,
NAME,
AND
LOVE.

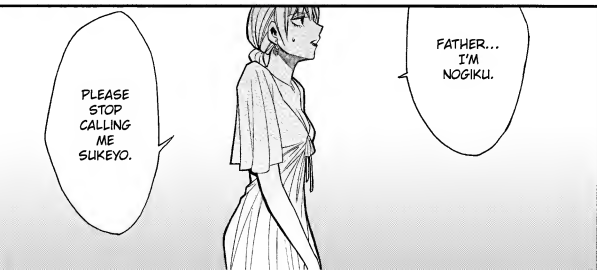


COME
OVER
HERE,
NOW.

WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH
YOU
TODAY?

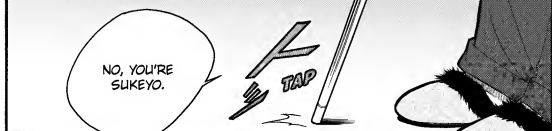


SUKEYO.



PLEASE
STOP
CALLING
ME
SUKEYO.

FATHER...
I'M
NOGIKU.





YOU
COULDN'T
EVER
SURVIVE
WITHOUT
ME.

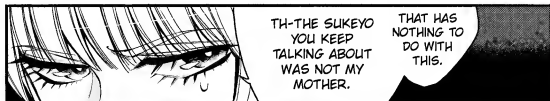
YOU
DON'T
KNOW
ANYTHING
ABOUT
THE
WORLD.

YOU'VE
HARDLY
LEFT
THIS
ESTATE.



SUKEYO
WAS MORE
CLEVER
THAN THIS.

WHY DON'T
YOU UNDER-
STAND THAT
MUCH?



TH-THE SUKEYO
YOU KEEP
TALKING ABOUT
WAS NOT MY
MOTHER.

THAT HAS
NOTHING TO
DO WITH
THIS.



IS THE
"MOTHER"
YOU'RE
TALKING
ABOUT
...

THAT
GOOD-
FOR-
NOTHING?



THAT I
LET HER
STAY HERE
UNTIL SHE
DIED.

IT WAS
FOR YOUR
SAKE...



*SHE'D
ALREADY
LOST HER
BEAUTY,
TOO, HADN'T
SHE?*



WHAT'S
MORE
...

SHE
HAD
NO
TALENT,
CLASS,
OR
WITS.



YOU!

**YOU'RE
THE ONLY
THING OF
WORTH
SHE LEFT
BEHIND!**

BUT
SHE
LOVED
YOU—

FOR
MY
SAKE?



I'LL
TREAT
YOU
ESPECIALLY
NICE,
TODAY.

NO
...



COME
ON. GO
BACK
TO THE
REFINED
AND
WELL-
MANNERED
SUKEYO
YOU'VE
ALWAYS
BEEN.



INCREAS-
INGLY
LOOKS
LIKE HERS
THE
MORE
YOU
GROW.

THAT
BEAUTIFUL
FACE...

YOU'RE
DIF-
FERENT
FROM
HER.

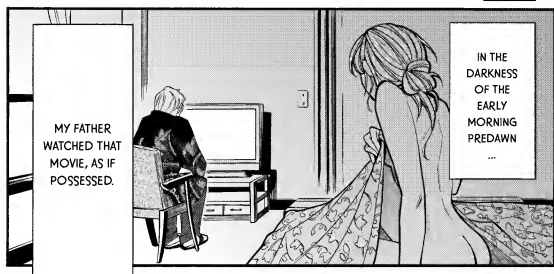


I FEEL
LIKE EVEN
I CAN
RETURN
TO MY
YOUTH.

WHEN I
HEAR YOUR
SWEET
VOICE,

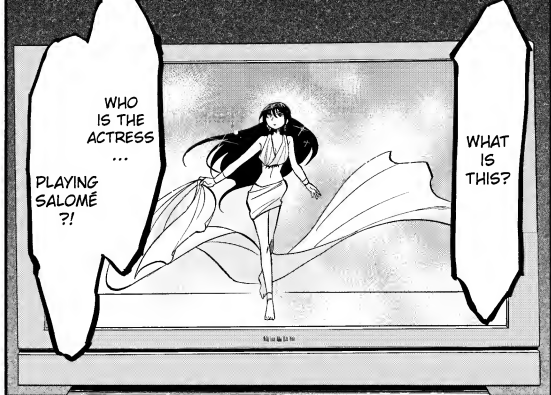


AND
THEN...



MY FATHER
WATCHED THAT
MOVIE, AS IF
POSSESSED.

IN THE
DARKNESS
OF THE
EARLY
MORNING
PREDAWN





YOU DID
THIS TO
ME, AND
TO MY
MOTHER

...

FOR
SOME-
THING
SO
STUPID!



WHO
GIVES
A
DAMN
ABOUT
BEAU-
TY?!

Chapter Twenty-Eight:
the end

Chapter Twenty-Nine: Nogiku





NOW
THAT I
THINK
OF IT,







THIS
IS JUST
WHAT YOU
AND YOUR
MOTHER
LACKED.

LOOK
CLOSELY
AT THIS
SALOMÉ,
SUKEYO.



UNDER MY
DIRECTION,
WITH HER
BEAUTY AND
TALENT...

FOR A
WOMAN
NAMED IZANA
TO PERFECT
THE ACTRESS
SUKEYO
FUCHI.

YOUR
MOTHER
WAS NOTHING
MORE THAN
EQUIPMENT
...



SHE WAS
RADIANT
BEYOND
ANYTHING
REAL.

THOUGH
SHE WAS A
MANUFACTURED
IMAGE...



THIS
PERFORMANCE
FROM AN
ACTRESS
WHOSE NAME
I DON'T EVEN
KNOW...

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT.

IT'S
BEEN SO
LONG...
I'D FOR-
GOTTEN
...



HAS MADE
IT PAINFULLY
CLEAR THAT
YOU'RE ONLY
HALF A
BODY!

AHH...
IT'S NOT
ENOUGH
...

YOU'RE
NOT
ENOUGH!

EASE
MY
LONELI-
NESS,

EASE
THIS...
ETER-
NALLY
UN-
QUENCH-
ABLE
THIRST
...

SUKE-
YO!

I
CAN'T.





YOU'RE
DEFECTIVE
GOODS
WITH A
FALSE
VENEER!

YOU
CAN'T DO
ANYTHING
BUT LIE
ON YOUR
BACK.

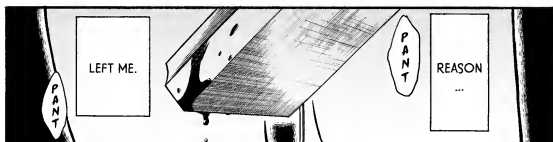


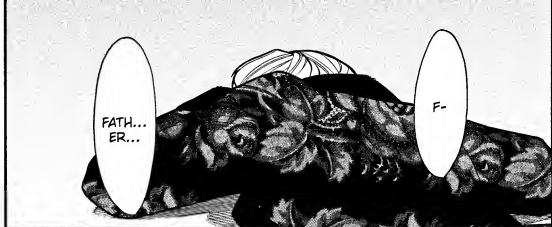
I
NEED
A
DRINK.

THAT WAS
ENOUGH.

DAMN
IT...















YOU'RE
...

SO
MUCH
MORE
FORTUNATE
THAN YOUR
SISTER,
THOUGH.

IT'S A
THOUSAND
TIMES
BETTER
THAN
BEING
HERE
WITH
YOU.

NO
MATTER
HOW
HARD
THE LIFE
WAITING
FOR ME
OUT
THERE
IS...





KASANE
...



YOU
HAVE AN
OLDER
SISTER
...

HER
NAME
IS...



SISTER?



AN
ABOM-
INABLE
GIRL,
NAUSE-
ATINGLY
UGLY.

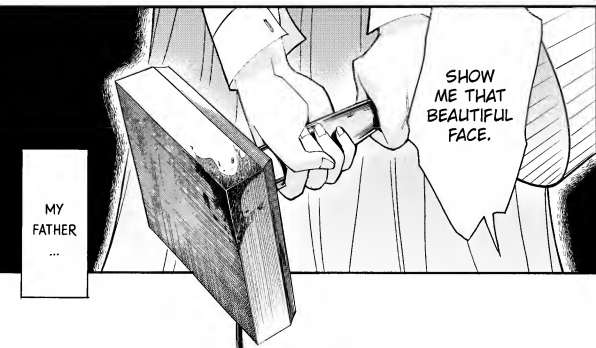
SHE
WAS
MINE AND
IZANA'S
CHILD...

YES.
FROM
DIFFERENT
MOTHERS.



AND
CHOSE
YOU, THE
BEAUTIFUL
ONE.

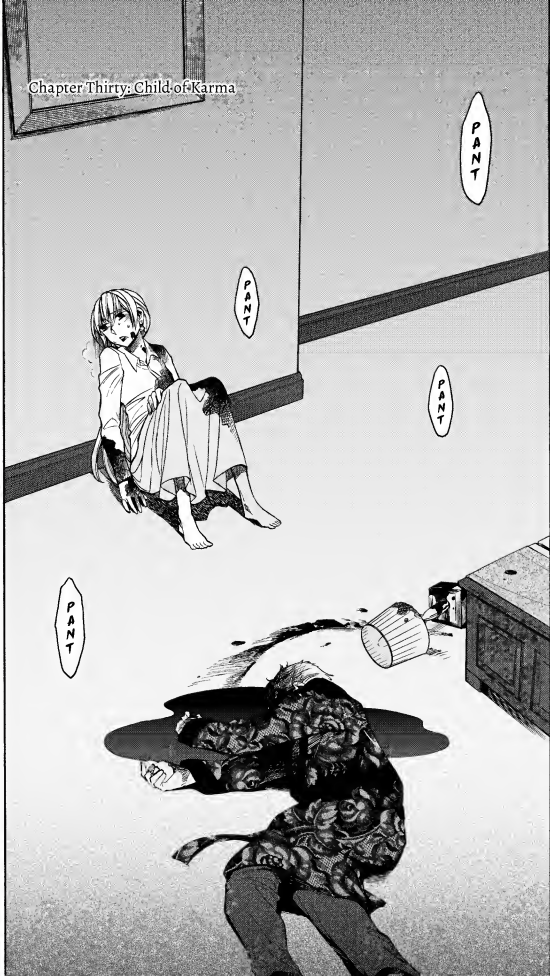
THAT'S
WHY I
GOT RID
OF HER,

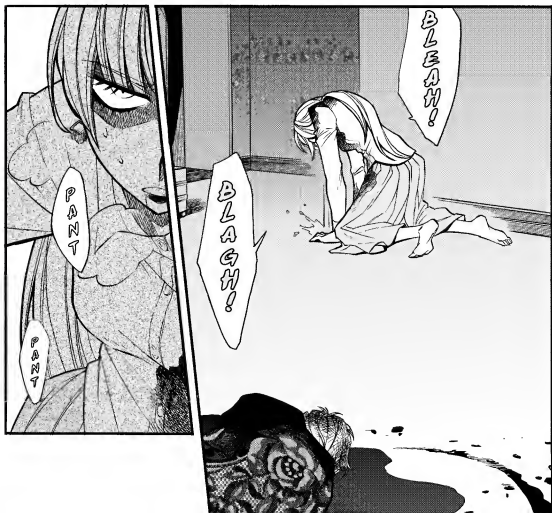
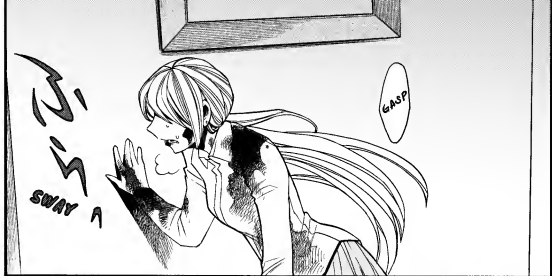


SUKEYO!

NEVER
CALLED
ME
NOGIKU,
NOT
EVEN AT
THE END.

Chapter Thirty: Child of Karma





I
COULDN'T
THINK
STRAIGHT
...

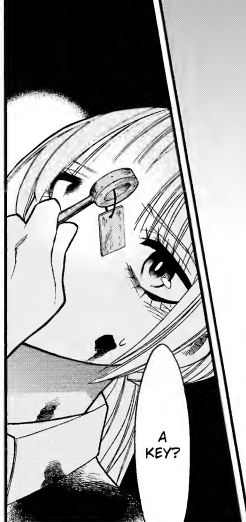
BUT I
FIGURED
I HAD TO
TAKE SOME
MONEY, AT
LEAST.

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUMMAGE

CLINK



A
KEY?



SUKE-
YO.

WAIT...

THE
BASE-
MENT?



WHAT'S
UNDER
HERE?

THERE'S
WIND
BLOWING
FROM THE
FLOOR.



WHY?

GET
AWAY
FROM
THERE.



IT'S A
ROOM FOR
KEEPING
ALCOHOL.

OH,
THAT'S
CALLED
A "WINE
CELLAR."



MY
CUTE
SUKEYO
...

SO
CHILDREN
CAN'T
GO NEAR
THERE,

ALL
RIGHT?



I'VE NEVER
SEEN HIM BRING
ALCOHOL
OUT OF THERE,
EVEN ONCE.

BUT...

A WINE
CELLAR?

INSIDE HIS
WALLET,
ANYWAY?

AND WHY
WOULD HE
PUT A KEY LIKE
THAT YOU'D
HARDLY USE...



I HAVE
AN IDEA
AS TO
WHY.

I
WAS IN...
A VERY
SCARY
PLACE,
BEFORE
SHE
DIED.

A
SCARY
PLACE?

YES.

I BEGAN
LIVING
WITH MY
MOTHER
IN THIS
HOUSE
WHEN I
WAS FIVE
YEARS
OLD.

NO-
GIKU.



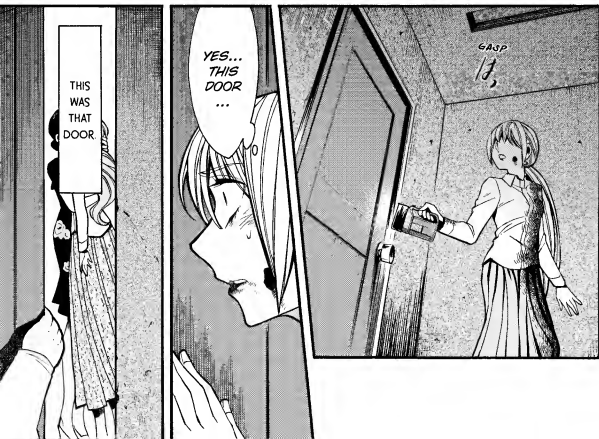
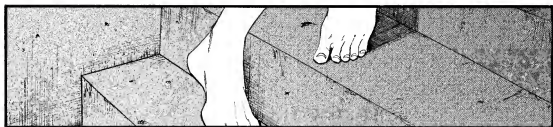


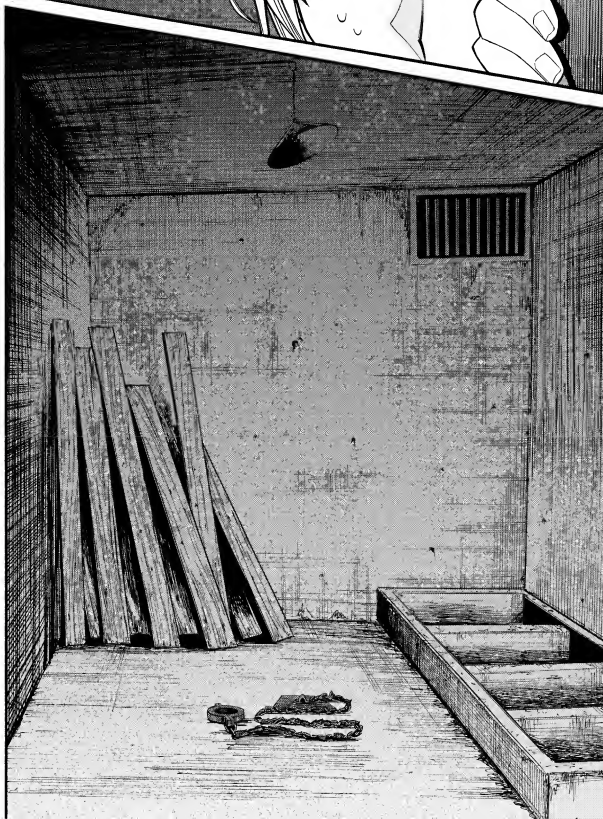
AND
VERY
LONELY.

IT WAS...
SMALL...
AND
DARK...

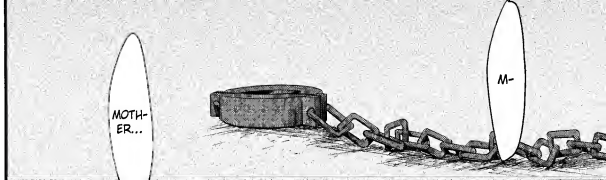


I FELT
SOMETHING
CLOSE TO
CONVICTION.









MOTH-
ER...

M-



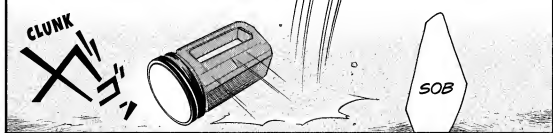
IN THIS
DARK,
DIRTY,
WINDOW-
LESS
ROOM?

HOW
MANY
YEARS
...

DID
YOU
SPEND
ALONE
...



THIS IS
WHAT LEFT
YOU SO
WEAKENED
...





IT
WON'T
GO
AWAY.



WHERE
DO I
PUT MY
ANGER
NOW?!



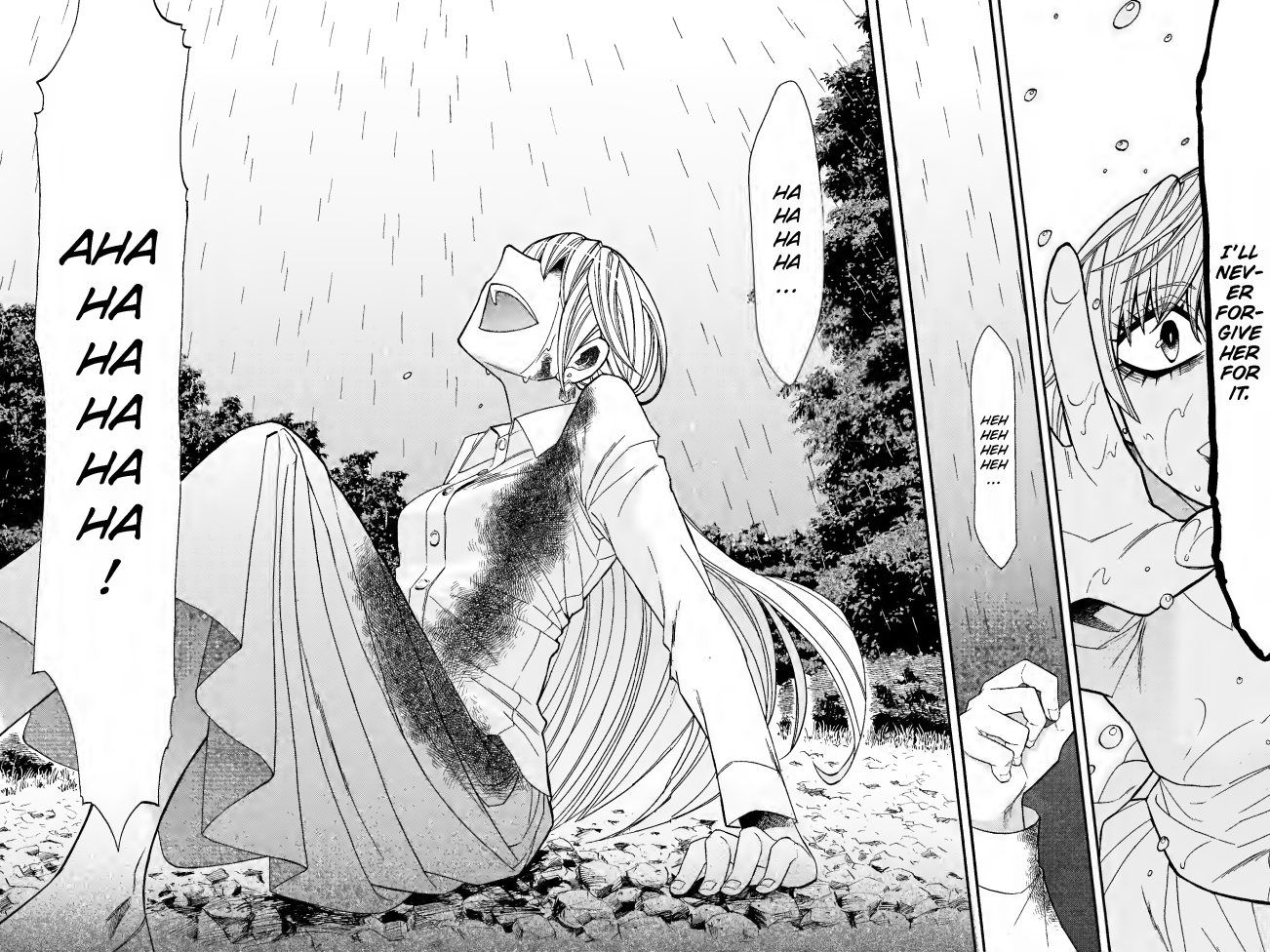


AHA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
!

HA
HA
HA
...

HEH
HEH
HEH
HEH
...

I'LL
NEV-
ER
FOR-
GIVE
HER
FOR
IT.





MY FATHER
TOLD ME...



**YOU'RE
REALLY
PRETTY.**

I'D
NEVER
BE ABLE
TO LIVE
OUTSIDE,
BUT...





I WILL
MEET
HER.

MY ONLY
SISTER...THE
DAUGHTER
OF THAT
HATEFUL
WOMAN,
IZANA...

KASANE.

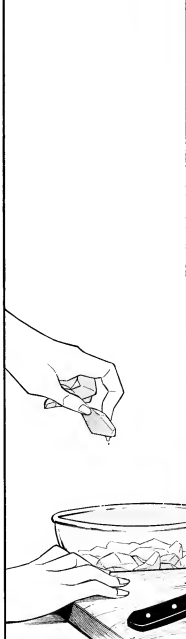
Chapter Thirty:
the end

Chapter Thirty-One: Want

IT'S LIKE
DRINKING
WATER...

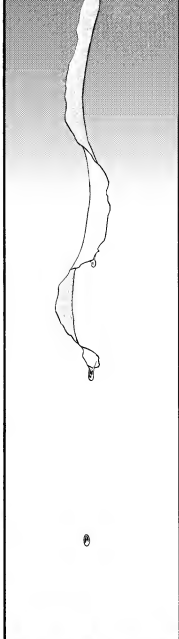
WHEN
YOU'RE
THIRSTY.





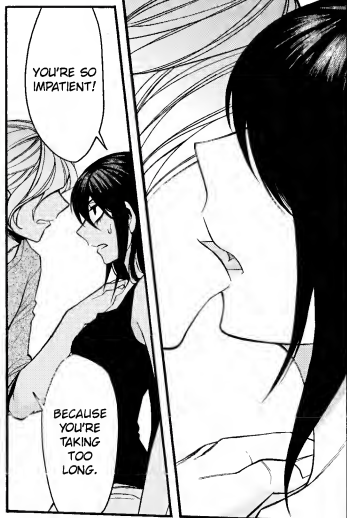
LIKE
SEEK-
ING
SOME-
THING
SWEET

...



BECAUSE
YOUR TONGUE
WANTS IT.





I WAS ALONE,
REFLECTING
UPON THE
MEMORIES OF
SALOMÉ THAT
LINGERED IN
MY BODY.

THE FINAL
PERFORM-
ANCE
OVER, I
WAS ON
THE STAGE,
CLEARED
OF PROPS
AND SETS...

NAAN
I LOVE
ONLY
THEE.

I AM
ATHIRST
FOR THY
BEAUTY."



SALOMÉ.



EVEN
WITHOUT
WORDS



...



I THINK I
KNEW THAT
THIS WOULD
HAPPEN.

FROM THE
MOMENT
OUR EYES MET
DURING THE
APPLAUSE
AFTER THE FIRST
PERFORMANCE...



I'D FELT
TOWARD
UGOU-SAN.



I DIDN'T
HAVE THE
SAME KIND
OF PASSION...



YES
...

I
RESPECT
YOU
AS AN
ACTOR,
TOO.

NOW,
HOWEVER,
I CAN
ACKNOWLEDGE
YOU
AS AN
ACTOR.

BECAUSE
I WAS
FRUSTRATED.

I COULD
TELL THAT
YOU HAD
TALENT, BUT
IT SEEMED
LIKE YOUR
LOOKS HAD
MADE YOU
ARROGANT,
AND YOU
WERE
SLACKING
OFF.

HEY,
WHY WERE
YOU SO
HARSH
WITH ME
DURING
THE
REHEARSALS
FOR
SALOMÉ?



BUT
RIGHT
NOW,

MAYBE
THAT'S THE
ONLY
REASON
IT'S YOU.



DRINKING
EACH
OTHER
IN...

EATING
EACH
OTHER,



PUTS
MY HEART
AT EASE.

THIS MOMENT
OF SIMPLE
SUPERFICIAL
CARESS...



I CAN'T
LET MYSELF
THINK
ABOUT...



THESE
SWEET
WORDS
CAN
SLIDE
OFF MY
TONGUE
...

I
CAN'T
THINK
ABOUT
IT.



IS
BASED
ON A
LIE.

HOW
THIS RAW
SATIS-
FACTION
...



THAT'S WHY
WE CAN
CONVERSE SO
PLAYFULLY.

BECAUSE
I'M YOUR
EQUAL.









AND
WHAT YOU
CAN FEEL
ARE REAL.

PLEASE
...

ONLY
WHAT
YOU
CAN
SEE...



JUST
LOOK AT
WHAT'S
ON THE
SURFACE.



JUST...

I DON'T
KNOW IF YOU
CAN CALL
THIS EMPTY
THING LOVE.



AND NOW,
HERE, I'M
LOVED AND
FULFILLED.

I CAN'T LET
GO OF THIS
HAPPINESS.



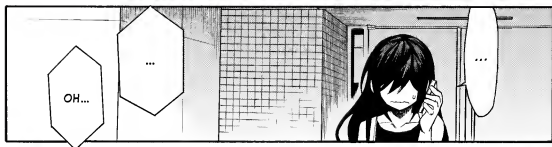
I WAS
NEVER
EVEN
TREATED
LIKE A
WOMAN
BEFORE
...



YOU
HAVEN'T EVEN
BEEN PICKING
UP THE DAMN
PHONE SINCE
YESTERDAY. I
CALLED YOUR
CELL AND
YOUR HOME.

WHERE
THE
HELL
HAVE
YOU
BEEN?

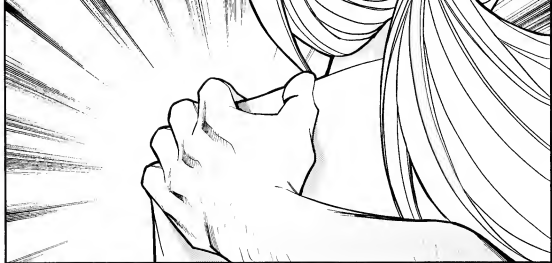
HA-
BUTA-
SAN?





HABUTA-
SAN?







BUT
STILL
...

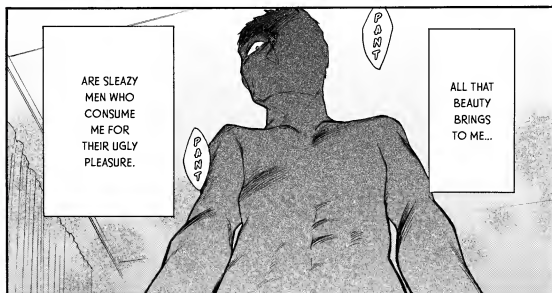
NO...THERE
WAS JUST
SOMEONE WHO
HAPPENED TO
LOOK LIKE A
YOUNGER
VERSION
OF HER.



YOU'RE
SO
CUTE.



SHE
LOOKED
SO
MUCH
LIKE
HER.





BEAUTY
IS...



A
CURSE.

A
BLESS-
ING.











OH,
IT'S
YOU.

HUH?
A CALL?

YES,
FROM A
STRANGE
MAN.

IT'S
NOT
SOME
FAN OF
YOURS,
IS IT?



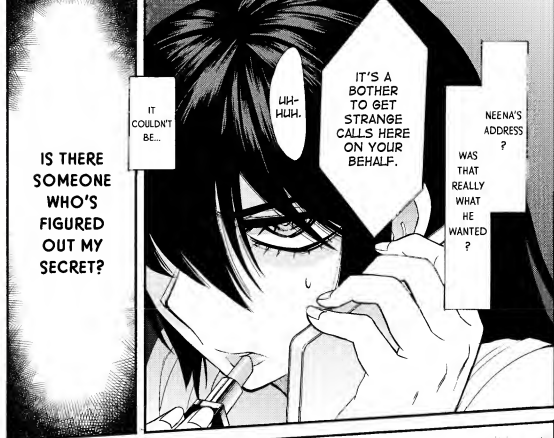
BUT...
HE WANTED TO
GET IN CONTACT
WITH KASANE,
RIGHT?

I CAN'T THINK
OF ANY OTHER
BUSINESS
ANYONE COULD
HAVE WITH HER.



I THINK
THAT STRANGE
MAN MUST
HAVE WANTED
TO KNOW YOUR
ADDRESS.

YES,
SINCE SHE
WAS YOUR
ASSISTANT,
WASN'T
SHE?



IS THERE
SOMEONE
WHO'S
FIGURED
OUT MY
SECRET?

IT
COULDN'T
BE...

WH-
HUH.

IT'S A
BOTHER
TO GET
STRANGE
CALLS HERE
ON YOUR
BEHALF.

NEENA'S
ADDRESS
?

WAS
THAT
REALLY
WHAT
HE
WANTED
?



A CALL
FROM A
STRANGE
MAN?

YES.

NO...
THAT
COULDN'T
BE.



HEY,

IS THERE
REALLY NO
ONE ELSE
WHO KNOWS
ABOUT THE
LIPSTICK AND
MY MOTHER'S
SECRET?

...



JUST
BE MORE
CAUTIOUS
AROUND
OTHER
PEOPLE
RIGHT
NOW.

I'LL
LOOK
INTO
IT.



YOU'RE
SURE
THE CALL
WAS
FROM A
MAN?

YES,
THAT'S
WHAT
SHE
SAID.

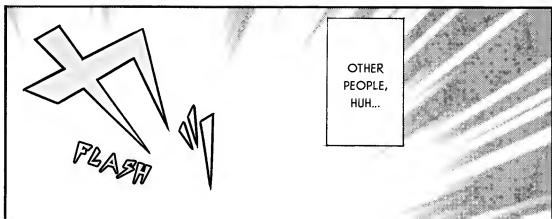


DON'T SLIP UP
JUST BECAUSE
YOU'RE INTO
A GUY.



I DON'T
NEED TO HEAR
ANY OF THAT
FROM YOU!

I
WON'T.



OTHER
PEOPLE,
HUH...



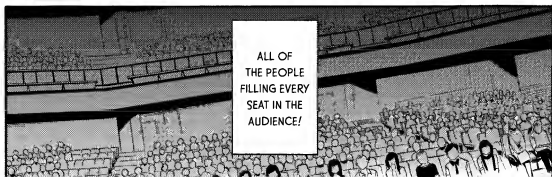
JUST
AS A CAT
LEAVES ITS
MASTER
WHEN IT
KNOWS ITS
DEATH IS
NIGH, YOU
KNOW?"

"WHERE IS
MY JOURNEY
HEADED?
PERHAPS I'M
LOOKING FOR A
PLACE TO DIE,
IF ANYTHING.



NOT
TO
MEN-
TION...

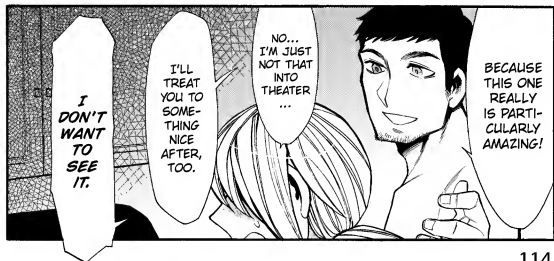
THIS MAY BE JUST ONE
PERFORMANCE, BUT
THERE ARE SO MANY
PEOPLE INVOLVED IN
ITS PRODUCTION...



ALL OF
THE PEOPLE
FILLING EVERY
SEAT IN THE
AUDIENCE!







HA
HA.
NO,
I'M
SORRY.

I DON'T
WANT TO
FORCE
YOU
INTO IT.

OH
...

UM,

I'M
SORRY.

I DON'T
WANT TO
LOOK AT
ANYONE
PRETEND-
ING TO BE
SOMEONE
THEY'RE
NOT!

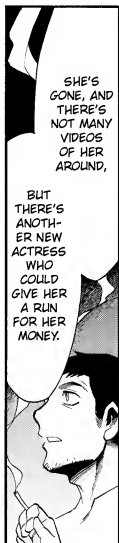
BUT
YOU SAID
YOU'VE
NEVER SEEN
HER ACT,
RIGHT?

YOU'RE
THE
SPITTING
IMAGE OF
SUKEYO
FUCHI...



NEENA
TAN-
ZAWA?

*SHE'S
PLAYING
THE LEAD IN
THIS ONE.
NEENA
TANZAWA.*



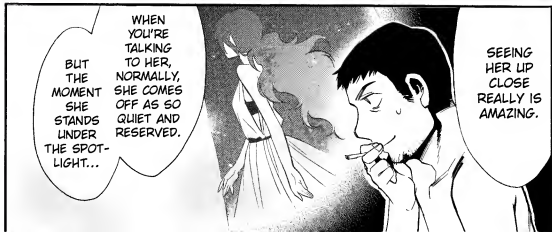
SHE'S
GONE, AND
THERE'S
NOT MANY
VIDEOS
OF HER
AROUND,

BUT
THERE'S
ANOTHER
NEW
ACTRESS
WHO
COULD
GIVE HER
A RUN
FOR HER
MONEY.



HOW
DISGUSTING.

THE ONE MY FATHER
WAS RAVING ABOUT,
FROM SALOME?



BUT
THE
MOMENT
SHE
STANDS
UNDER
THE SPOT-
LIGHT...


WHEN
YOU'RE
TALKING
TO HER,
NORMALLY,
SHE COMES
OFF AS SO
QUIET AND
RESERVED.

SEEING
HER UP
CLOSE
REALLY IS
AMAZING.



SHE
EXPRESSES
EVERYTHING
ABOUT THAT
CHARACTER'S
LIFE: THEIR
JOY, THEIR
SORROW.

SHE
TURNS INTO
SOMEONE
ELSE, AS IF
THE WOMAN
WHO WAS
THERE A
SECOND
AGO NEVER
EXISTED.



SHE'S LIKE
THE SECOND
COMING OF
SUKEYO FUCHI.



SEE HER IN
THIS NEENA
TANZAWA'S
ACTING.

THIS MAN
AND MY
FATHER
BOTH...



HUH?



OH,
I'M
SORRY.

I WAS
REALLY
BAB-
BLING.

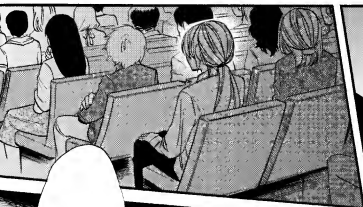
MAY-
BE
I'LL
SEE
IT.



IF YOU'RE
GOING TO
PRAISE IT
THAT
HIGHLY...



...



"HEY,
GUYS.
I'VE
ACTUALLY
FALLEN
FOR THIS
GIRL..."







"YEAH,
AND
SHE
..."

"ROOT-
LESS
GRASS
?"

ROOT-
LESS
GRASS,
SHE
SAID."

"BUT
SHE
CALLED
HERSELF
SOMETHING,
I REMEM-
BER..."

"SHE'S
LIKE A FREE-
WHEELING
STRAY CAT,
A DANDELION
SEED ON
THE WIND."



I CAN'T KEEP
WATCHING
THESE PEOPLE
PRETEND.

I CAN'T. I'M SO
ANGRY, I CAN'T
EVEN PAY ATTENTION
TO THE STORY.



SUKEYO!

BECAUSE
I WAS
ALWAYS...



DON'T
YOU
TALK
BACK
TO
ME!

BUT...
I
CAN'T
...

YOUR
VOICE,
AND THE
WAY YOU
TALK
ARE
WRONG!

THE
WAY
SHE
SPOKE
WAS
MORE
REFINED,
MORE
NOBLE!

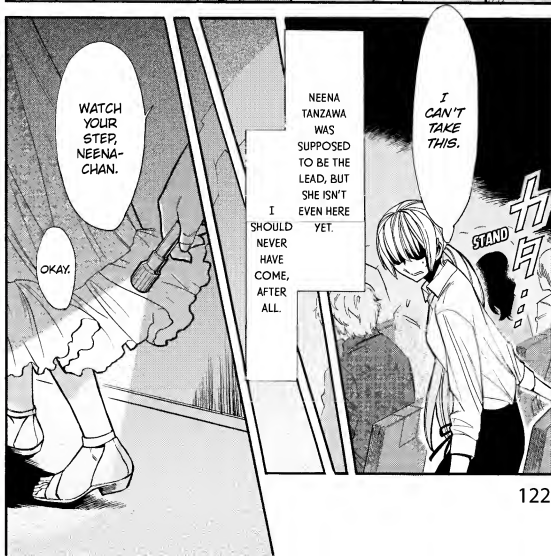
I-I'M
SORRY
...

WHY
DON'T
YOU
GET IT?!
SUKEYO
DOESN'T
WALK
LIKE
THAT!



IT ONLY
FEELS
DISGUSTING
AND
UNCOM-
FORTABLE
TO ME!

BEING
FORCED
TO KEEP
"ACTING."



WATCH
YOUR
STEP,
NEENA-
CHAN.

OKAY.

NEENA
TANZAWA
WAS
SUPPOSED
TO BE THE
LEAD, BUT
SHE ISN'T
EVEN HERE
YET.

I
SHOULD
NEVER
HAVE
COME,
AFTER
ALL.

I
CAN'T
TAKE
THIS.

STAND



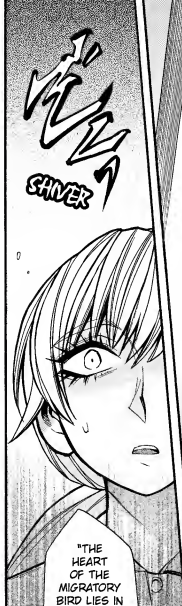


Chapter Thirty-Two: the end









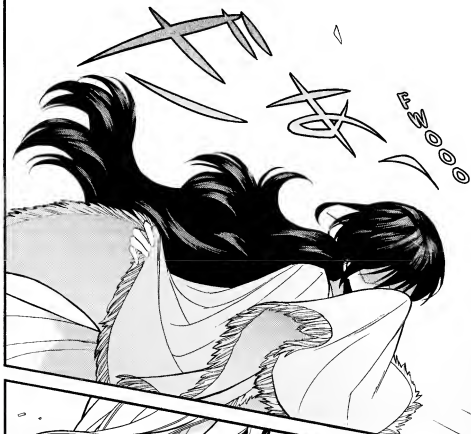
"THE
HEART
OF THE
MIGRATORY
BIRD LIES IN
THE SOUTH,
AS THE
HEART OF
THE RIVER
LIES IN THE
DISTANT
SEA."



IT WASN'T
JUST LIKE...
HER EX-
PRESSION
CHANGED.

IT
WAS
SOME-
HOW
...



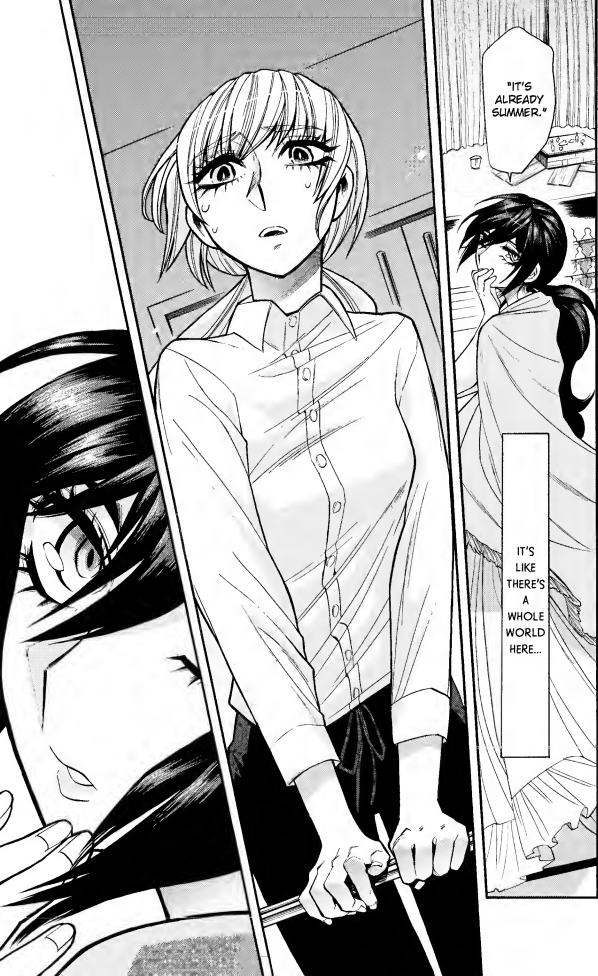


AS IF I CAN
REALLY SEE
THE GRASS
AND TREES
SWAYING.

"WHAT
A DEEP
GREEN."

IT'S LIKE
THERE
REALLY IS
A BREEZE...

AND
THAT'S
NOT
ALL.



"IT'S
ALREADY
SUMMER."

IT'S
LIKE
THERE'S
A
WHOLE
WORLD
HERE...



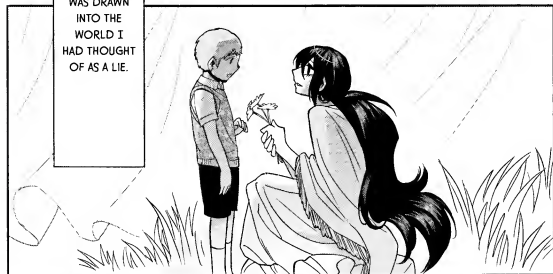




BUT
ONCE SHE
WAS ON
STAGE...



EVERYONE
WAS DRAWN
INTO THE
WORLD I
HAD THOUGHT
OF AS A LIE.



EVEN SOME-
ONE WHO'S
ALWAYS HATED
"ACTING"...



EVEN
ME.



NEENA-
CHAN,
GREAT
JOB OUT
THERE!



OH,
GREAT
JOB!

LOST IN
THOUGHT
?



は
GASP

NEENA-
CHAN?



YES
...

I
REALLY
HAVE TO
WATCH
OUT NEXT
TIME.

Oh!
ARE YOU
BOTHERED
BY HOW YOU
PAUSED FOR
AN INSTANT
WHEN YOU
WERE COMING
UP TO THE
STAGE?



I SAW
MY MOTHER
AGAIN. AND SO
CLEARLY, TOO.

THAT
MOMENT,

SOMEONE
ELSE SAW
HER?

SO THAT
WASN'T A
VISION OF MY
MOTHER?!

THAT WAS
BECAUSE
THERE WAS
A GUEST
STANDING
BEHIND THE
AUDIENCE
SEATS.

SHE LEFT
ONCE, BUT
THEN CAME
BACK.

REALLY
?

NEENA-
CHAN?

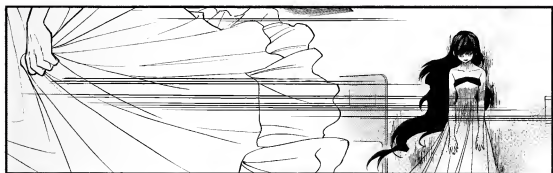
SLAM



IF IT WASN'T
AN ILLUSION,
THEN WHAT
WAS IT?

I SWEAR I SAW
MY MOTHER IN
THE DARKNESS.







LIKE
SOME-
THING
FALL-
ING...

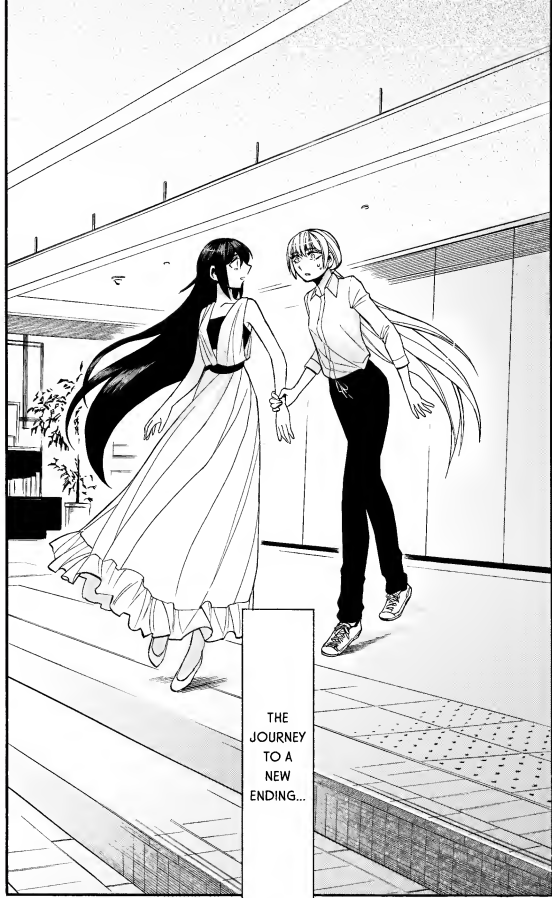


LIKE
SOME-
THING
WARP-
ING...

WATCH
OUT!



IT BEGINS:



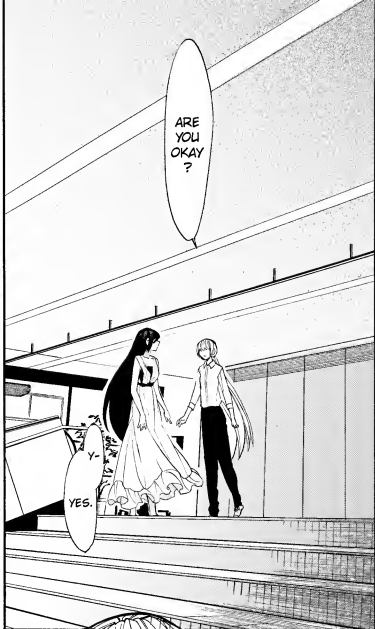


TH-

THANK
YOU...



KASANE









IF YOU
LIKE, I
COULD
GET YOU
SOME
TEA, AS
THANKS.

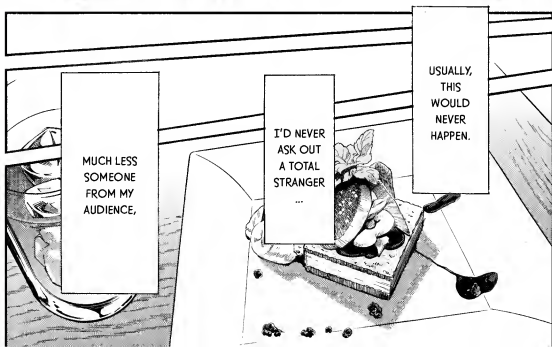
WE'RE
DONE
FOR
TODAY.



HUH?

ARE
YOU
FREE
RIGHT
NOW?

HEY,



MUCH LESS
SOMEONE
FROM MY
AUDIENCE,

I'D NEVER
ASK OUT
A TOTAL
STRANGER

...

USUALLY,
THIS
WOULD
NEVER
HAPPEN.



WHAT'S
WRONG?

OH
...

NOTH-
ING.



NO
MATTER
HOW
MUCH
SHE
RESEM-
BLED
MY
MOTHER.



AND
YOU
ARE?

I THINK
YOU KNOW,
BUT I'M
NEENA
TANZAWA.

TO
SUCH A
FANCY
SHOP.

THIS
IS JUST
THE FIRST
TIME I'VE
EVER BEEN
INVITED...

I DON'T
COME HERE
OFTEN,
EITHER, BUT
I FIGURED
IT'S NICE
TO, SOME-
TIMES.

BY
THE
WAY
...





LATELY...
I'VE
NEVER
HAD A
MOMENT
OF PEACE
...

OH...
I-I'M
SORRY.

I
SUD-
DEN-
LY...
LET
DOWN
MY
GUARD

...
BE-
CAUSE...
NO
ONE'S
EVER
BEEN
THIS
KIND
TO ME
BEFORE.

100
3
100
3 DRIP
1
DRIP

THIS
GIRL
...



HAS SUCH
A RADIANT,
BEAUTIFUL
FACE...

BUT
SUCH A
DELICATE
HEART.



WHY
?

HOW
CAN
SHE
BE SO
SAD?

WHY
DOES
SHE SEEM
SO UN-
CERTAIN
OF HER-
SELF?



JUST LIKE
GLASS.

SHE'S
BOTH
BEAUTIFUL
AND
FRAGILE
...









SO...

AND,
UM...

I FEEL
LIKE WE
DIDN'T
TALK
ENOUGH,



DO YOU
WANT TO GO
SOMEWHERE
TOGETHER,
SOMETIME?

IF YOU
DON'T
MIND,

WELL,





YEAH,
ABSO-
LUTELY!

GREAT!
THEN I'LL
CALL YOU
AGAIN,
LATER.

SURE.



UNLIKE
THE MEN
WHO
TREAT ME
KINDLY
BECAUSE
THEY LUST
AFTER ME.

HERS IS
PURE
KINDNESS,
ASKING
NOTHING
IN
RETURN...

THIS
MUST
BE THE
FIRST
TIME
SINCE
MY
MOTH-
ER.

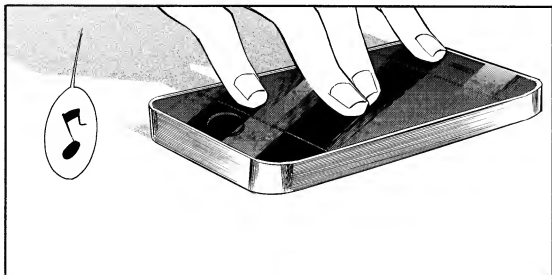




HELLO ?

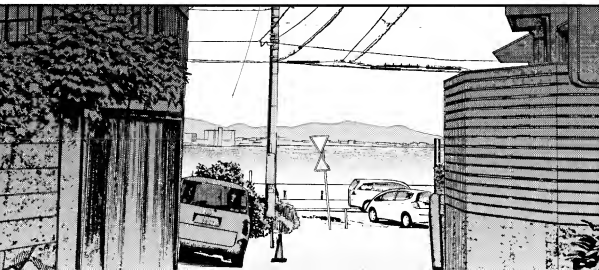
IT'S NOGI-KU.

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?











Chapter Thirty-Five: At the Water's Edge



WHERE
HAS SHE
LIVED
ALL THIS
TIME,
THEN?

O-
OH?

THIS
IS MY
FIRST
TIME...
SEEING
THE
SEA.



MAKE HER
LOOK AS IF
SHE HAD A
REALLY GOOD
UPBRINGING,
THOUGH.

stride
STRIDE

HER MANNER
OF SPEECH
AND HER
GESTURES...



AH!

YOU'LL
GET
WET!

YOU
REALLY
CAN'T
SEE THE
END,
HUH?



I'VE
RE-
TURNED
...

TO THE
WATER'S
EDGE
I RE-
MEMBER
FROM
THAT
TIME
WITH
NEENA.

BUT
THIS
TIME
...



EKK!

WOOSH

I
BROUGHT
A REAL
FRIEND.

YEAH.

BUT IT
WAS SO
COLD, I
THOUGHT
MY HEART
WOULD
STOP.

ARE
YOU
ALL
RIGHT
?

OH!

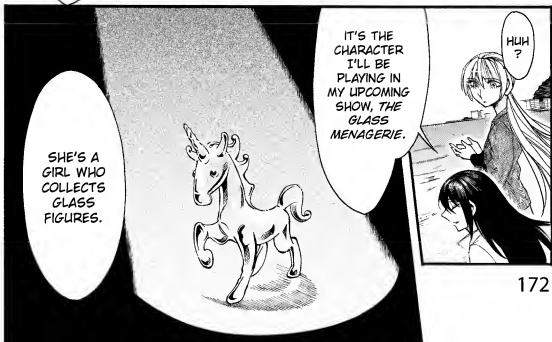
IF THIS IS
ENOUGH TO
MAKE YOUR
HEART STOP,
YOU'RE IN
TROUBLE!

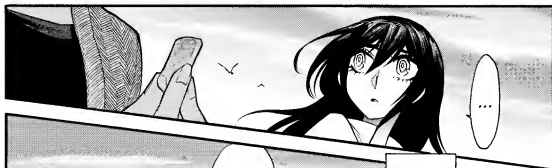
TEE-
HEE.

THIS
IS...MY
FIRST
TIME
SEEING
THIS,
TOO.

THAT'S
SEA-
GLASS.

WHAT
IS
IT?



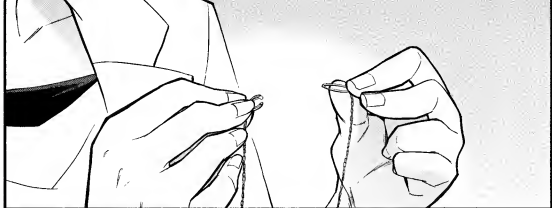








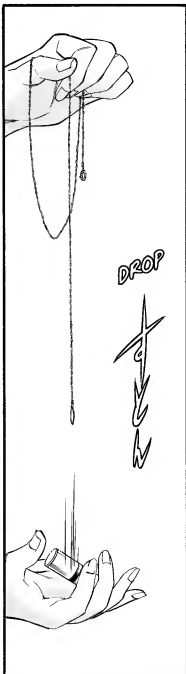




A
MEMENTO
OF MY
MOTHER.

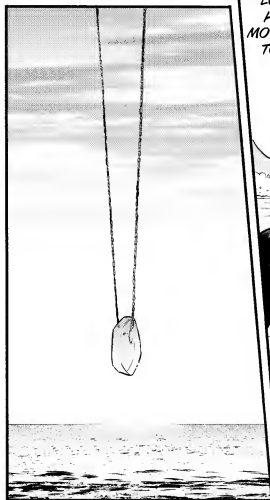


WHAT'S
THAT?





THERE
WE GO.



SO
SHE'S
LOST
HER
MOTHER,
TOO?

A
MEMENTO
OF HER
MOTHER?



THE
CHAIN
DOESN'T
MATTER.

BESIDES
...

NO...I
COULDN'T.

IT'S
PART OF
SOMETHING
IMPORTANT
TO YOU.



I-
I'VE...

THANK
YOU,
NO-
GIKU.

I'M
GLAD I
COULD
BE HERE
WITH YOU
TODAY.

UM...
ALWAYS
WANTED TO
COME TO
THE SEA,
TOO...



COULD I
LIVE LIKE
THAT, TOO?

AND LIVE
LIKE YOU
WANT TO
LIVE.

GO
WHEREVER
YOU WANT
TO GO.





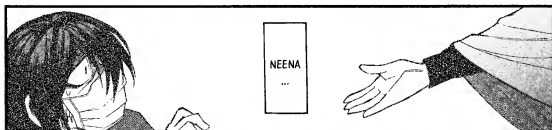
I WOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN
ABLE TO
HAVE SUCH A
LOVELY TIME
WITH HER.

IF MY
FACE WERE
STILL UGLY,

LET'S
GO GET
SOMETHING
NICE TO
EAT.



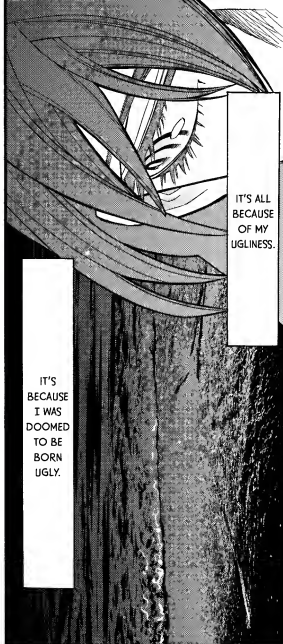
IF I WERE
JUST NOT
UGLY...



NEENA
...



I WOULDN'T
HAVE MET
YOU LIKE I
DID, EITHER.

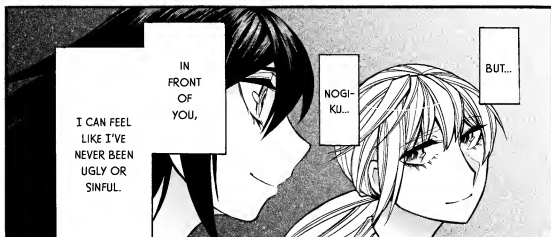


IT'S
BECAUSE
I WAS
DOOMED
TO BE
BORN
UGLY.

IT'S ALL
BECAUSE
OF MY
UGLINESS.



IN FACT, WE
MIGHT HAVE
BEEN ABLE
TO REALLY
TALK, TO BE
FRIENDS.



I CAN FEEL
LIKE I'VE
NEVER BEEN
UGLY OR
SINFUL.

IN
FRONT
OF
YOU,

NOGI-
KU...

BUT...



AS IF WE'VE
KNOWN EACH
OTHER FOR A
LONG TIME.

I FEEL THIS
STRANGE
CONNECTION
TO YOU...



WHAT
ARE YOU
LOOKING
AT?



SHE'S
SMILING
...



NO...IF I
CALL THAT
WOMAN
ANYMORE,
SHE'S
BOUND TO
REPORT
ME TO THE
POLICE.

YOU
WERE
ABLE TO
GET A
HOLD OF
KASANE
FUCHI'S
WHERE-
ABOUTS, I
ASSUME?

IT'S
NONE
OF YOUR
BUSI-
NESS.

MORE
IMPOR-
TANTLY,



AMAGA-
SAKI-
SAN?

YOU'D DO
ANYTHING
FOR ME,
DIDN'T YOU,

YOU
SAID
...

*People on Twitter started calling my workplace this at some point

MY ASSISTANTS AND THEIR WEIRD SOUNDS: The Doumu-san Arc

Is not just good at drawing, but also talking and cooking.

Assistant-san number 2: Doumu Kobayashi-shi...



You can read his manga at Hyenas Clubs.



Ahvelo! Velo velo velo velo velo!

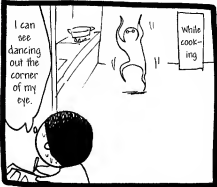
Ow ah owwww!

Whizz



I can see dancing out the corner of my eye.

While cooking



Ahhh! Aaaaow ow!

URK!

FLAIL

FLAIL

Recently after work, Doumu-san was walking around with a backpack on their head.



*During regular conversations, Doumu-san just talks about normal, sensible stuff.

MY ASSISTANTS AND THEIR WEIRD SOUNDS: The Kirikakushi-san Arc

He's a man's man, calm and kind.

Assistant-san number 1: Saburo Kirikakushi-shi



Poko-chan.

Thank you.



It's Poko-chan...

Cross out!



A man's man, who never holds back his fountain of babbling as he rescues you.

I'm sorry.

It's okay.



When I asked him, "What's Poko-chan?" he said, "A normal middle-aged man."

The Hyperbolic OFFICE CHAMBER D*

Note: Like the Hyperbolic Time Chamber from Dragonball

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR BUYING VOLUME FOUR

It's already volume four! And this is all because of the many people who have been so generous to me. So much has been going on besides working on this manga. I got flustered over my first autograph session, and flustered over my first guest appearance at an event.

That event was "Kasane no Kai," and it's held every summer in Shizuoka. It's a super chaotic event with the theme of the ghost story Kasanegafuchi. They have plays, Noh songs, and a talkshow segment. With some trepidation, I agreed to appear in the talk segment.

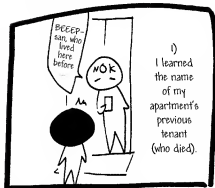
I'd never done anything like that before, so I didn't do all that great. I felt bad for the audience and the other people on stage, but it was really fun talking and hearing people talk on the theme of "From Kasanegafuchi to the manga Kasane." I was really glad to be there.

Thank you so much to the audience, Seiji Konita-sama, Masao Higashi-sama, Noboru Yasuda-sama, Housai Tsuruoka-sama, all the other people on stage, and the staff.

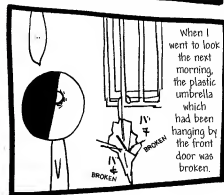
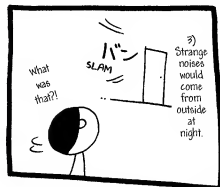
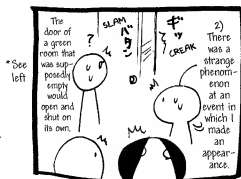
-Daruma Matsuura



Three things that happened that made me think this year's Bon festival's a doozie



Note: Bon is a festival for venerating the spirits of ancestors



Kasane 4

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